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Parties, tailgating, dances, clubs, and the bar is all places where drinking is a major factor. In today's society, drinking socially is considered acceptable but what happens when drinking gets out of hand? Society wants to blame alcohol related incidents on everything other than the real issue which is poor education on how to drink responsibly. In our society the legal drinking age is 21 years old, yet we can drive a car at the age of 16, we can be prosecuted as an adult at the age of 17, and can be sent to war at the age of 18, therefore the legal drinking age limit should be lowered.

Drinking in U.S. culture is not accepted like in other countries which are probably why the U.S. has so many problems with irresponsible drinking. Through research done over past twenty years it has been proven that history may be repeating itself, similar to that of prohibition and failed efforts to control people from consuming alcohol. In the past the government tried to ban the selling of alcohol with prohibition, this took place when my great grandfather was a young adult. When efforts failed the age limit was set at the age of 18 until 1984. During this year the National Minimum Drinking Act came into effect. This act calls for all states to raise their drinking age limit to a minimum of 21 years old or risk losing federal highway funds. The government actually blackmails the states into getting what they want, because of this all the states raised their drinking age to 21 by 1987.

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Lowering the drinking age is an idea shared by many Americans. Ruth C. Engs is a professor at Indiana University, and has been studying this for over twenty years. She too shares the idea that history will repeat itself—with the drinking age similar to that of prohibition—due to the law being unenforceable. Her research shows that many people under the age of 21 view drinking as a “forbidden fruit” or something rebellious, which is when drinking becomes dangerous. Statistics show that those under age are more likely to be heavy “binge” drinkers which is only a 4% difference from drinkers who are of age. This research shows that the drinking age being 21 has very little affect. Engs’ research also shows that during the first few years after the drinking age was in effect, more students drank illegally than legally.

Why is it that in every other culture drinking is accepted in everyday life? Groups such as Greeks, Chinese, and the German has less or no drinking problems in their societies. “19 countries that have a drinking age limit of 18...2 countries in Europe have age limits of 16; 1 country (Japan) has a minimum drinking age of 20. In Canada where the drinking age laws are legislated by each province, three provinces set the consumption age at 18 and others and 19.” (2) Also two countries in Europe has drinking age laws of 16 years old yet these countries do not have half the problems of that of the United States. Engs says that in most countries, “Alcohol is neither seen as a poison or a magic potent, there is little or no social pressure to drink, irresponsible behavior is never tolerated, and young people learn at home from their parents and from other adults how to handle alcohol in a responsible manner.”(3)